

Headlights Driving South by IronicAppreciation

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: AS I SAID, Gen, I have no idea where I'm going with this, I'm flying blind, Road Trip!!!, and I'm making this up as I go, idk - Freeform, im doing this for my boyf who's been stresst and deserves everything that I can't fucking give, ships won't be the main focus but there may be some

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Jane Hopper/Jane Ives/Eleven, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Will Byers, but these six for sure, maybe the others, parents and siblings and such

Relationships: But other than that - Relationship, Nothing's really set in stone yet, and platonic wileven because they fucking clear my crops and water my skin, idrk - Relationship, there's gonna be background lumax

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2018-01-04

Updated: 2018-01-04

Packaged: 2022-04-03 15:13:56

Rating: Teen And Up Audiences

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,406

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

"Some days, I wake up and reflect on how good and wholesome my friends are."

"Awww, dude-"

"Today is not one of those days."

Or--the ST Road Trip fanfic nobody wanted but I made anyway!

Headlights Driving South

Author's Note:

Since this does diverge from canon, here's some things you should know going in:

- 1) Mike and El never dated (because if I ever have to think about all those thirteen year olds kissing again, I'll vomit)
- 2) No one calls her Eleven, because she likes having a name and an identity and she deserves to be a person. That said, the party is still allowed to call her El (or, in Max's case, Ellie)
- 3) All the kids are about 17/18 in this, so yes, if I mention sex, it is underage, but not THAT underage
- 4) About one year after the canon events of season two, Joyce and Jim decided they wanted a fresh start, that she didn't want to wake up in a house she had to hold her son hostage in, and that he didn't want to live in a place that was more a prison to his daughter than it was a home. So, they bought a house and moved in together. THIS IS NOT JOPPER!!!
- 5) Steve, Nancy, and Jonathan have all graduated and are in college (Steve's the only one in state). They still visit, but. They're adults now. They've got their own lives.
- 5.5) (they're also all together but shhhh)
- 6) The basic plot line of this fic is the Party wants to Get Out of Hawkins at least once before they enter their senior year, so they're packing up their shit and taking a road trip to California, where they're gonna stay for the rest of the summer, then drive back. It's a

win-win, because Mr. Mayfield really misses his daughter.

7) That's...about it. I'll let you know if I think of anything else. If you're confused, ask questions in the comments!!

"Has anyone seen my black bra?"

Jane's voice calls out irkedly, mildly muffled by the wall separating her from the others. A slight shuffling can be heard as she digs through her clothes, frustration escalating dangerously by the minute.

"Itchy Lace or Ugly Cotton?"

Will shouts back, folding yet another hoodie (his third thus far) and cramming it into the crevice he's discovered between the books and board games in Dustin's knapsack. He's been assigned the unofficial task of making sure that none of his friends are underpacked, while Lucas is currently on the other side of the couch expediting his own designated job: assuring that *Mike* isn't *overpacked*.

"Ugly Cotton," Jane clarifies disgruntledly, her disheveled face suddenly appearing at the frame of the door, lips pressed to a pout as she exudes a soft huff of irritation.

Will zips up his friend's backpack and clammers to his feet, stretching and brushing his hands on his jeans as he stands before turning to face his almost-sister (Joyce and Jim have made it very clear that it's Never Going To Happen, but the sentiment remains fairly familial, anyways) with a sheepish smile.

Jane glares back at him, gaze bearing no real malice, and crosses her arms over one another, sighing again; she's never been all that great at the *patience* schtick.

Snickering good-naturedly, Will runs a bony hand through his hair, making it stand on end and flare out awkwardly from it's usually trim, neat composition. He's sprouted up immensely, just like Jonathan did when he was around 15, although he's still the shortest boy in the party, having unbeknownstly befriended three wily idiots at age six who would end up being the most *freakishly tall* teens in Hawkins' admittedly small pool of freshly-fledged almost-adults by age sixteen.

Nevertheless, he's still at least a full head taller than Eleven, who, even on the sparse occasion that she wears heels, never breaches the threshold of 5'6. Even after four years of living together, she's still belligerently bitter over the height advantage her not-brother has on her ("I hate having to look up at him. It makes my neck cramp").

"Try checking under my bed," Will suggests with a shrug, and it's only after El's brazen footsteps can be heard quietly trudging up the stairs that Lucas lets out a mirthless chuckle.

"*Dude*," he snorts when a baffled Will turns to look at him, wearing a puzzled, querying expression, "do I want to know what your sister's underwear is doing under your *bed*?"

Will's eyebrows furrow and he reaches a scraggly, thin arm over to grip one of the couch cushions, swatting sharply at Lucas with it.

"Shut up, *asshole*," he grumbles, lips tugging up into an uncharacteristic smirk at the yelp his friend emits after being hit with the pillow, "she threw it at me last week during monopoly and never bothered picking it back up."

Mike blinks owlishly, looking up at Will with an expression of bemusement.

"She threw a *bra* at you during monopoly?" he asks.

Will grins, whacking Lucas one last time over the head and brushing his uncombed hair out of his eyes.

"I took all the utilities," he explains with a smile that could melt the poles faster than global warming already does. Mike laughs and nudges playfully at his shin.

"That's cold, Byers."

"I'm grateful it was a *bra* she threw and not, like, a *bookshelf*," Will concedes with a solemn nod, positively beaming when this elicits a snort from Mike strong enough to reduce him to a fit of coughs.

Rolling his eyes, Lucas returns to his prior occupation of pilfering through Mike's pack, growing ever more aggravated by the continuous, disheartening discovery of its downright superfluous contents.

"Really, Mike?!" he demands, pulling out from the bottom of the satchel a worn, weathered copy of *'The Star Bible: An Absolute Essential for the Aspiring Astronomer!'*

Will takes one glance at the book's tattered cover and *breaks down*, his abrupt shrieking laughter sounding acutely to Lucas like the shrill, agonized screeching of a mauled animal.

"Holy shit, I haven't seen that thing since, like, the second grade!" he exclaims a little too excitedly, collapsing onto the couch and wrapping his skinny arms around his similarly skinny stomach, practically fucking *wheezing*.

Lucas elects to ignore this grandiosely overexuberant reaction to young Mike Wheeler's stupid goddamn star book, and glowers pointedly at elder Mike Wheeler's flushed face, instead. Will continues to snicker lunatically beside him.

"Why would *anyone* need this, *ever*?" he scowls at his oldest friend, clearly unimpressed.

Any attempt to answer on Mike's part is mercifully cut off by the ring of the doorbell, however, followed mere seconds later by an obnoxiously raucous series of knocks.

Will sighs, finally recovering from what both *looked* and *felt* like some sort of mortifying, laugh-induced stroke, and struggles to stand, letting out an audible groan as he turns to Lucas.

"And *that* would be Dustin with your girlfriend." He pauses for a moment, face contorting in a wistful display of pondering thought, "or maybe Max with your boyfriend. Who knows at this point."

He shrugs, nimbly shifting through the doorway to greet the newcomers before Lucas can get the chance to react.

Belatedly, Lucas throws the cushion Will had only *just* been assaulting him with at his already retreating form, a grin crossing over his face in spite of himself.

"*Dick*," he mumbles almost fondly under his breath, and Mike slyly takes the opportunity of his temporary distraction to slip the book back in his bag.

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When Will opens the door, Jane's triumphant exclamation of "*found it!*" ringing jubilantly from upstairs is the first thing Max hears.

Dustin snorts, reaching over her head to ruffle Will's hair (he's *real*

damn proud of the three inches he's got on him, jumping to flaunt them at every chance he gets) and adjusting his grip on his backpack strap.

Not a single actual *greeting* has been exchanged yet, but somehow, this feels more right.

The skinny little *shit* is still blocking the doorway though, beaming brightly and blinking battily, green eyes so wide set and doe-ish that Max finds herself having a hard time remembering he's *seventeen* now, not *twelve*.

(It gets easier to recall, of course, when she recognizes how damn *effortlessly* he could implement the top of her head as an *armrest* nowadays.)

She clears her throat with an indicative, restless cough, and Dustin glances down at her, not for the first time marveling at how she and El managed to sustain such a potent animosity for a little over a *month* despite being so remarkably similar.

"Are you ever gonna let us in, Byers?" she queries, jabbing sharp, chipped-nailed fingers into the base of Will's ribs and raising an unplucked eyebrow at him.

He recoils reflexively, but doesn't move, shaking his head earnestly and holding a finger to his lips, gaze flicking between Dustin and Max and the interior of the house as he shushes the new arrivals.

Max gawks, unable to believe how such a *scrawny* little man can prove to be such a *massive* obstruction.

"I'm *trying* to spare you from Jane's half-naked *traipsing* around the house!" Will explains when he's met with nothing but confused

expressions, hissing deliberately as his eyes narrow and his arms cross lithely over his chest.

Max does a double take, starting at the sudden, unsettling resemblance to his almost-sister Will's just assumed.

"Unless that's something you particularly *want* to see," he challenges, thin lips pressed prudently as if to say: '*Go on! Take a look! I dare you! Just don't come back crying when you're fucking traumatized.*'

Instead, all Dustin says in response is, "*Man*, you spend *way* too much time around El. You're starting to look like her."

Will opens his mouth, perhaps in attempts to retaliate, but is interrupted by an unseemly shriek from inside the house, which Max recognizes quickly and with a little bit of secondhand shame as her boyfriend's, shrilly *squealing* out the discernible words, "*Jesus, El, where is your shirt?!*"

Dustin stands, comically frozen, in the doorframe, his prior allusions of shoving Will aside to get into the house suddenly abandoned.

The latter simply leans against the door's hinges beside him, wearing the smuggest expression Max has ever seen on his face.

He catches her eye, and shoots her the world's most blatant look of '*I told you so*'.

She just glares at him poignantly in lieu of a reply, then pushes past both him and Dustin, remarking idly, "I still can't believe you actually call her *Jane*. It's weird."

Will blathers something after her about how it's *her name, for fucks sake!*, which she aptly ignores, padding nonchalantly into the living room, where she finds Mike crumpled on the Bypers' couch, seeming close to *death*, his arms curled around his thorax as he attempts in vain to stifle the wheezes drawn from his mouth in between

vehement giggles.

Next to him, Lucas has frantically pressed himself up against the wall, as if Eleven's exposed breasts might attack him if he gets too close.

The girl in question's got a borderline *affronted* expression on her face, her fingers frozen in the act of clasping her bra over her ribs. Her wild hair flares out around her face like an obscure, brunette halo, and her eyebrows are pinched together, frown muddying her features confoundedly.

"You've seen breasts *before*, Lucas," she points out, bleak and blunt as she goes on to clarify, "when you had sex with Max."

Mike chokes on a barking laugh, and Max finds herself hoping wistfully that he accidentally *asphyxiates* and *dies*.

Lucas punches him before Max can grab the pocketknife she keeps on her person and commit a fucking *felony*, though; punches him good and hard, with an audible *thwack*, right in the solar plexus, making him snap at the center like one of those ruler-bracelets, and Max is reminded graciously of why exactly she *loves* this boy so goddamn much.

"*El*," Lucas reprobates, staring at his still-exposed friend sternly, "you're *seventeen* now! You can't play the dumb card anymore. Everyone knows that *you* know exactly what things mean!"

And even though Jane Hopper is a *brilliant* actress, there's no mistaking the subtle smirk playing at her lips as she cocks her head innocuously to the side and bats her eyelids.

"I don't understand," she breathes.
"The hell you don't!" Lucas shouts.

Mike finally unfurls well enough to properly inhale, and he blinks ambivalently before letting out a shaky breath and *wincing*, knees tugged involuntarily into his gut.

"El," he suggests softly, in a gentle inflection reserved only for special occasions (or, in this case, when Lucas punches him square in the stomach and he can barely even *breathe*), "there's a shirt on that chair right over there."

Eleven huffs, then stalks over to where one of Jonathan's NYU sweaters is draped noncommittally over Hopper's favorite recliner, tugging it haphazardly over her head and scowling moodily, shaking the hair from her eyes.

"I have nice boobs," she states sulkily, grumbling in a low, wavery tone that never fails to make Max smile.

"Can't argue with that," the ginger pipes up, wearing a grin that could very well split her face down the middle if she wasn't careful. She tosses her hair over one shoulder, sweeping it back with her fingers and flinging it across the side to get it out of her face, before beaming brightly and dutifully stepping over the several half-packed suitcases strewn about the floor to greet her boyfriend with a kiss.

"Hi," she says giddily to Lucas's lips, like it's a secret.
"Hi," his lips smile back.

"Awww," Mike coos obnoxiously, adding on as an underwhelming afterthought, "the rest of us have no one."

Lucas grimaces, his voice precocious as he shoots him an unambiguous warning glance.

"You're inching dangerously closer and closer to *death*, Wheeler," he

mutters, his hands not once migrating from their designated position on either side of his girlfriend's face.

And Mike has the audacity to *laugh*, until Max's sharp, icy stare falls unwaveringly upon him, and she raises an eyebrow and says, "Careful, Mike. if you play with fire, you're gonna get burned.

He shuts up after that, and Lucas is elegantly reminded of why exactly he *loves* this girl so goddamn much.

"Okay, *first of all*, I said I'd *help* you make sure you had all the stuff you needed. I'm not sure how that translated that to, '*don't worry, I'll pack everything for you*' in your head."

Will marches into the living room suddenly with Dustin trailing at his heels, the former's face screwed up in obvious frustration as he fumes, and Mike realizes astoundedly just how much his best friend resembles his *mom* when he's scolding someone.

He may be a good foot taller than her and have sharper, more angular features, but all Mike can see as Will tosses the pack he's been digging through at its rightful owner is Joyce Byers, frowning at him in a perfected display of Maternal Contempt, and telling him that *no, dear, she's not disappointed. She's mad.*

"And *second*," he goes on, voice rising precariously, "I thought we unanimously decided that *one* backpack and *one* suitcase per person was enough."

He gestures apoplectically towards Dustin's hands, and Dustin gazes down at his *two* (2) backpacks and *none* (0) suitcases, then looks back up at Will and shrugs.

"Eh," he says apathetically.

Mike scrambles to his feet briskly, scanning the room for the quickest means of escape in the event that Will Byers chooses this particular moment to spontaneously combust.

Not for the first time, however, the residents of the Bypers' sitting room are *miraculously* saved by the chief of Hawkins' extraordinary daughter--not through her Mechanisms of Manipulation or her Mastery of Telekinesis, but by her *Undeniable Aptitude* in *Royally Fucking Things Up*.

A clamorous crash from upstairs and a muffled whine of "Wiiiiillll!" brings the youngest Byers back from what would *indubitably* have been a disastrous calamity of rage-driven terror, and he bounds up the stairs with a frantic reply of "coming!", completely forgetting his original goal of eviscerating *one* (1) Dustin Henderson.

A couple of moments pass in relative quiet after that, until Dustin shakes his head, puts down his two backpacks, and asks in troubled bewilderment,

"How did he know she was going to be *naked*?"

Author's Note:

PLEASE LEAVE ME FEEDBACK AND JUST
COMMENTS IN GENERAL IM A SLUT FOR
ATTENTION AND VALIDATION THANKS